

McCrory, Governor

Donald R. van der Vaart, Secretary



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Public comments sought on new oyster sanctuary/fishing reef in Hyde County

MOREHEAD CITY – The N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries is seeking public input on a proposed oyster sanctuary near Wysocking Bay. Comments will be accepted at a meeting scheduled for 6 p.m. June 14 in the Hyde County Government Building, 30 Oyster Creek Road, Swan Quarter.

Staff with the state's Oyster Sanctuary Program will discuss a plan to construct Gull Shoal Oyster Sanctuary, a 10-acre sanctuary located about 4 miles (3.5 nautical miles) southeast of Wysocking Bay. Those in attendance will be asked for input on the plan.

Oyster sanctuaries are areas where oyster reefs are created with the aim of providing a brood stock to help restore oyster populations. The reefs attract native oyster larvae, which settle and grow to produce millions of eggs annually that are carried by currents and tides to surrounding areas. The reefs also serve as habitat for finfish populations and provide hook-and-line fishing opportunities. To protect the brood stock, no shellfish harvest or bottom-disturbing gear is allowed within oyster sanctuaries.

Once constructed, the Gull Shoal Oyster Sanctuary will be part of the Sen. Jean Preston Oyster Sanctuary Network, a system of small, interconnected oyster sanctuaries within the Pamlico Sound and its tributaries.

For more information, contact Curt Weychert with the Oyster Sanctuary Program at 252-808-8055 or Curt.Weychert@ncdenr.gov.

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